

5.0 UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The following sections discuss the unavoidable adverse environmental impacts that would not be mitigated to less than substantial. In some cases, these sections include discussions of potential impacts that can not be determined at this time.

5.1 NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE

5.1.1 Community Impacts

Since the No Build Alternative would not include improvements to major arterials or freeway systems as anticipated in local land use plans and policy documents, the goals of the cities along the SR-22 corridor to attain overall transportation mobility would go unmet (see Section 4.6).

5.2 TSM/EXPANDED BUS SERVICE ALTERNATIVE

5.2.1 Community Impacts

The TSM/Expanded Bus Service Alternative is not consistent with land use policies of local jurisdictions that anticipate improvements to mobility and transportation facilities (see Section 4.6).

5.2.2 Air Quality

The TSM/Expanded Bus Service Alternative would result in increases in the pollutant burden over the No Build Alternative that would exceed the SCAQMD thresholds for nitrogen oxides. Because mitigation for nitrogen oxides is most effective on a regional scale, and because some of the elements of the TSM/Expanded Bus Service Alternative are not included in the existing (1998) RTP, this alternative would not conform with the existing RTP. This impact is considered substantial by SCAQMD.

5.3 FULL BUILD ALTERNATIVE

5.3.1 Cultural

During construction of the Full Build Alternative, there is the potential for unearthing unknown buried cultural materials. Mitigation is proposed, but residual impacts cannot be determined at this time. The implementation of the Full Build Alternative would result in the removal of the Pacific Electric Santa Ana River Bridge, which is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (see Section 4.5). There is no prudent and feasible avoidance for this impact (see Section 9.0) if the Full Build Alternative is chosen. However, the Reduced Build Alternative does not include removal of the Pacific Electric Santa Ana River Bridge.

5.3.2 Community Impacts

The removal of the former Pacific Electric right-of-way for an arterial in the Full Build Alternative would be inconsistent with the land use plans for the Cities of Santa Ana and Garden Grove. The City of Santa Ana has designated the former Pacific Electric right-of-way as a class I bicycle trail, and as one of the variety of uses designated by the City of Garden Grove. However, this inconsistency could be mitigated if the designation is changed by the City of Santa Ana.

The Country Woods Apartment complex in Garden Grove, which appears to be predominantly Hispanic, would be acquired by the Full Build Alternative. Since it would be difficult to relocate this highly cohesive community as a whole, substantial impacts to community cohesion that cannot be mitigated would occur. In addition, the removal of houses from one side of the street along Sherwood Lane in Santa Ana cannot be avoided under the Full Build Alternative, a substantial impact to the cohesiveness of this community.

At the City Gardens Apartment complex in Santa Ana, the Full Build would remove existing parking and some residential units. The site is a legal non-conforming use because it does not have sufficient parking and because it is zoned for agriculture, not multi-family residential. Because the Full Build Alternative would make alterations to the site, it would lose its legal non-conforming use status, and can legally be forced by the City of Santa Ana to comply with the zoning and/or parking ordinances. This would lead to conversion to agriculture (and removal of all multi-family residences) and/or the creation of additional parking. Because there is not sufficient land available to add parking, at the least, additional units would have to be removed to create sufficient parking to meet the requirements. How the city would enforce the ordinances cannot be determined at this time.

There are two high-visibility service stations that would be acquired by the Full Build Alternative. If suitable high-visibility locations cannot be found on which to relocate these service stations, a substantial impact to these businesses would result (see Section 4.6).

5.3.3 Transportation and Circulation

The Full Build Alternative would result in HOV traffic entering the northbound SR-55 HOV lane in excess of its capacity. Since mitigation for this impact is not feasible, this would result in a substantial and unavoidable adverse traffic impact under this alternative (see Section 4.7).

5.3.4 Air Quality

The Full Build Alternative would result in increases in the pollutant burden over the No Build Alternative that would exceed the SCAQMD thresholds for nitrogen oxides. Because mitigation for nitrogen oxides is most effective on a regional scale, and because some of the elements of the Full Build Alternative are not included in the existing (1998) RTP, this alternative would not conform with the existing RTP. This impact is considered substantial by SCAQMD.

5.3.5 Noise

Construction noise is only considered to be substantial in exceptional cases, such as pile driving and crack and seat pavement rehabilitation operations. These impacts would only be temporary due to construction activities. Otherwise, Caltrans' Standard Specifications (Section 7 and 42) and Standard Special Provisions provide limits on construction noise levels, with normal construction noise levels not exceeding 86 dBA at a distance of 15 meters (50 feet). The Full Build Alternative may require pile driving and/or crack and seat pavement rehabilitation, and substantial short-term impacts would occur (see Section 4.9).

5.3.6 Parks and Recreation

Since the Full Build Alternative would preclude the class I trail proposed by the City of Santa Ana for the former Pacific Electric right-of-way, and because no mitigation is available to prevent this impact, a substantial impact to this proposed trail would remain after mitigation (Section 4.10).

Substantial visual impacts would remain after mitigation at the following parks and recreation resources: Pacific Electric Commemorative Area and Willowick Municipal Golf Course (see Section 4.13).

5.3.7 Visual Resources

In locations where houses are removed, the visual impact to the remaining residential viewers cannot be fully mitigated and a residual visual impact would remain.

The removal of landscaping for widening of the freeways and realignment of interchanges cannot be fully mitigated due to the lack of available area for replanting either within or outside the future right-of-way. The loss of landscaping would be a substantial visual impact.

The use of the former Pacific Electric right-of-way for an arterial would also lead to the following visual impacts that also cannot be reduced to less than substantial after mitigation: the removal of open space, the addition of new light sources, and the removal of the historic Pacific Electric Santa Ana River Bridge.

The addition of elevated connectors to and from the Pacific Electric Arterial would also result in unmitigatable blockage of views of signs at the following businesses: the Shell Gas Station, Garden Grove Storage, and Allspace Storage (see Section 4.13).

It is unlikely that all construction staging areas can be located inconspicuously, so short-term residual impacts would occur (see Section 4.15).

5.3.8 Construction Impacts

The Full Build Alternative may require pile driving and/or crack and seat pavement rehabilitation, and substantial short-term impacts would occur (see Section 4.93. and 4.15.1).

5.4 REDUCED BUILD ALTERNATIVE

5.4.1 Cultural Resources

During construction of the Reduced Build Alternative, there is the potential for unearthing unknown buried cultural materials. Mitigation is proposed, but residual impacts cannot be determined at this time.

5.4.2 Community Impacts

There is one high-visibility service station that would be acquired by the Reduced Build Alternative. If a suitable high-visibility location cannot be found on which to relocate this service station, a substantial impact to this business would result (see Section 4.6).

5.4.3 Air Quality

The Reduced Build Alternative would result in increases in the pollutant burden over the No Build Alternative that would exceed the SCAQMD thresholds for nitrogen oxides. Because mitigation for nitrogen oxides is most effective on a regional scale, and because some of the elements of the Reduced Build Alternative are not included in the existing (1998) RTP, this alternative would not conform with the existing RTP. This impact is considered substantial by SCAQMD.

5.4.4 Noise

Construction noise is only considered to be substantial in exceptional cases, such as pile driving and crack and seat pavement rehabilitation operations. Otherwise, Caltrans' Standard Specifications (Section 7 and 42) and Standard Special Provisions provide limits on construction noise levels, with normal construction noise levels not exceeding 86 dBA at a distance of 15 meters (50 feet). The Reduced Build Alternative may require pile driving and/or crack and seat pavement rehabilitation, and substantial short-term impacts would occur (see Section 4.9).

5.4.5 Parks and Recreation

Substantial visual impacts would remain after mitigation at the following parks and recreation resources: Pacific Electric Commemorative Area (see Section 4.13).

5.4.6 Visual Resources

A few houses would be removed under the Reduced Build Alternative, resulting in visual disruption of neighborhoods. The visual impact to the remaining residential viewers cannot be fully mitigated and a residual visual impact would remain.

The removal of landscaping for widening of the freeways and realignment of interchanges cannot be fully mitigated due to the lack of available area for replanting either within or outside the future right-of-way. The loss of landscaping would be a substantial visual impact (see Section 4.13).

It is unlikely that all construction staging areas can be located inconspicuously, so short-term residual impacts would occur (see Section 4.15).

5.4.7 Construction Impacts

The Reduced Build Alternative may require pile driving and/or cut and seat pavement rehabilitation, and substantial short-term impacts would occur (see Sections 4.9.3 and 4.15.1).

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